

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5677

S E C R E T PRETORIA 4376

NODIS-CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJ: SOUTH AFRICAN REACTION TO FIVE PRESIDENTS' DECLARATION

REF: A) STATE 239444 AND B) 239436

1. SHORTLY AFTER THE LOCAL RADIO CARRIED ANNOUNCEMENT OF FIVE PRESIDENTS' STATEMENT (ABOUT 5:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME SEPT 26) PM VORSTER CALLED TO ASK WHAT I KNEW ABOUT SITUATION AND WHAT INFORMATION I HAD ABOUT WASHINGTON'S REACTION. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY UPSET BY NEWS ACCOUNTS OF "REJECTION/ OF US-UK PROPOSAL AND PREOCCUPIED BY IMPACT THIS WOULD HAVE ON RHODESIA AND PUBLIC OPINION HERE. I TOLD HIM I HAD NOTHING BEYOND THE PRELIMINARY RADIO REPORTS BUT WOULD LET HIM KNOW WHEN I RECEIVED TEXT OF LUSAKA STATEMENT AND ANY RESPONSE FROM THE DEPARTMENT.

2. FOLLOWING TELECON WITH ACTING ASST. SECTYSEELYE IN WHICH HE GAVE ME TEXT OF DEPARTMENT STATEMENT AND RESUME OF ORAL POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL A, I CALLED THE PM AND HE ASKED THAT I COME TO LIBERTAS WITH TEXTS OF LUSAKA AND DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS, NEITHER OF WHICH HE HAD SEEN. WHEN I ARRIVED HE WAS CONFERRING WITH FONMIN JULLER, DEFMIN P.W. BOTHA AND BRAND FOURIE AND ASKED ME TO JOIN THEM. AFTER READING THE TWO PAPERS, PM MADE THESE POINTS:
A) HE FOUND THE LANGUAGE OF THE DECLARATION OBJECTIONABLE, BUT MORE IMPORTANT, KAUNDA AND NYERERE HAD GONE BACK ON THEIR

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WORD. IN THIS CONNECTION THE PM CITED YOUR MESSAGE OF

SEPTEMBER 21 REPORTING ON YOUR SUCCESSFUL TALKS WITH KAUNDA AND NYERERE (SECTO 27247); B) THE PLAN PUT TO AND ACCEPTED BY SMITH CONTEMPLATED A RHODESIAN SOLUTION WORKED OUT BY BLACK AND WHITE RHODESIANS IN RHODESIA UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE. THE FIVE PRESIDENTS WOULD HAVE THE BRITISH CONVENE A CONFERENCE OUTSIDE RHODESIA TO GET INVOLVED NOT ONLY IN ESTABLISHING AND DEFINING THE FUNCTIONS OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT BUT ALSO IN CONVENING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE AND DRAFTING THE DOCUMENT. THIS REPRESENTED A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE SCENARIO. C) HE WAS CONCERNED OVER HOW THIS CHANGE IN WHAT HAD ALREADY BEEN AGREED TO BY SMITH, CONSULTED WITH HIS CABINET AND CAUCUS, AND FAITHFULLY ADHERED TO IN HIS FRIDAY SPEECH, WOULD AFFECT SMITH'S WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE PROCESS TOWARD MAJORITY RULE. D) HE UNDERSTOOD WHY THE US AND UK WOULD NOT WANT TO INTERPRET THE LUSAKA DECLARATION AS A REJECTION, BUT HE WAS FRANKLY SURPRISED BY THE DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT WELCOMING THE DECLARATION. E) HE WOULD HAVE TO ISSUE A STATEMENT INDICATING THAT HE REGARDED SMITH AS HAVING ADHERED TO HIS END OF THE BARGAIN, EXPRESSING PUZZLEMENT OVER THE STAND TAKEN BY THE FIVE PRESIDENTS AND NOTING THAT HE WOULD LOOK TO THE US AND UK TO CLARIFY THE CONFUSION.

3. I TOLD THE PM THAT LEAVING THE RHETORIC TO ONE SIDE, THE FIVE PRESIDENTS HAD ACCEPTED KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN AND THE IMPORTANT POINT NOW WAS TO GET ON WITH THE PROCESS BY ESTABLISHING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. IN THE MEANTIME WE SHOULD AVOID ACTIONS OR STATEMENTS THAT WOULD IMPEDE OBTAINING THAT OBJECTIVE. HE RESPONDED THAT THE BALL WAS IN THE US AND BRITISH COURT. IN THIS CONNECTION HE REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT OF RHODESIAN FONMIN VAN DER BYL WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS UNHELPFUL. HE SAID HE WOULD BE RESTRAINED IN THE STATEMENT HE ISSUED TO PRESS AFTER CONFERRING FURTHER WITH HIS COLLEAGUES.

4. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS VAN DER BYL STATED:
"THEY (THE AFRICAN PRESIDENTS) AGREED IN ADVANCE AND NOW HAVE SHOWN THEIR TOTAL UNRELIABILITY AND IRRESPONSIBILITY.
"THEREFORE IT'S UP TO THE WESTERN POWERS, AMERICA AND
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SOUTH AFRICA IN PARTICULAR, TO SORT IT OUT."
TEXT OF VORSTER STATEMENT SENT PRETORIA 4372.
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